

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 L-03

PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 /070 W
----- 080834

P 131915Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL BELIZE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4617

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0098

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA PRIORITY

USCINCSO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELIZE 0028

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR PFOR GT BH UK

SUBJECT: PREMIER PRICE'S COMMENTS ON UK-GUATEMALA DISPUTE OVER
BELIZE

1. AFTER MY CALL ON GOVERNOR POSNETT IN BELMOPAN YESTERDAY, I STOPPED BY PREMIER PRICE'S OFFICE TO HEAR THE PREMIER'S VERSION OF THE LONDON TALKS.

2. PREMIER SAID HE HAD GONE TO LONDON TO DISCUSS THE DEFENSE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BELIZE, I.E., HOW TO GIVE EFFECT TO THE TERMS OF THE UNGA RESOLUTION. ACKNOWLEDGED A DEGREE OF DISAPPOINTMENT IN RECOUNTING THAT DESPITE HIS MOST PERSUASIVE EFFORTS HMG STILL REFUSED TO CONSIDER GIVING BELIZE A DEFENSE GUARANTEE, ADDING THAT HE MUST NOW CONCENTRATE ON WORKING OUT OTHER SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS.

3. THE PREMIER THEN HANDED ME A COPY OF A RESOLUTION ON BELIZE WHICH HE SAID HAD BEEN PASSED BY THE SECOND CONFERENCE OF THE HEADS OF GOVERNMENT OF THE EXPANDED CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY WHICH HAD MET IN ST KITTS IN DECEMBER. THIS RESOLUTION, AFTER A LENGTHY PREAMBLE "REQUESTS THE UNITED NATIONS TO UPHOLD AND PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE OF BELIZE AGAINST WANTON AND CAPRICIOUS
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AGGRESSION, MILITARY OR OTHERWISE, AND TO TAKE SUCH STEPS OF A

MULTINATIONAL CHARACTER AS WILL PROVIDE A GUARANTEE OF HER SECURITY RECOGNIZED WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN ORDER TO PROMOTE THE PEACE AND SECURITY OF THE REGION AND THE WELFARE OF CITIZENS OF BELIZE" HE SAID HE INTENDED TO CONTINUE TO WORK FOR SIMILAR EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FROM OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

4. AS REGARDS THE UPCOMING UK-GUATEMALA TALKS, PRICE INDICATED HE DOUBTED ANYTHING USEFUL WOULD COME OF THEM. HE SAID A NUMBER OF PROPOSALS AIMED AT SWEETENING A POSSIBLE SETTLEMENT PACKAGE WERE UNDER CONSIDERATION, AND HE GAVE ME A COPY OF A LIST OF AREAS IN WHICH AN INDEPENDENT BELIZE AND GUATEMALA MIGHT EXPAND THEIR COOPERATION. THIS LIST, HE EMPHASIZED HAD, AS YET, NO STATUS WHATEVER, BUT REPRESENTED ONLY A PRELIMINARY COLLATION OF IDEAS. IT INCLUDED A) LAW OF THE SEA AND JOINT EXPLORATION OF THE SEA; B) MEMBERSHIP IN CA BANK OF ECONOMIC INTEGRATION; C) HYDROELECTRICITY AND IRRIGATION; D) TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS; E) DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR BELIZE AND EL PETEN; F) F) INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF BELIZE-GUATEMALA WITH PARTICIPATION OF VWI, SAN CARLOS U., BELIZE TECHNICAL COLLEGE AND ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE; G) CARICOM-CACOM FOOD CORPORATION; H) CENTRAL AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ECOLOGY; I) CENTRAL AMERICAN OCEANOGRAPHIC INSTITUTE; J) HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION. THESE ACTIVITIES, ACCORDING TO THE PREMIER HYPOTHESIZING, WOULD BE CARRIED OUT UNDER THE AEGIS OF SELA AND WOULD BE ADMINISTERED BY A JOINT BOARD REPRESENTING CARICOM AND SIECA AS WELL AS BELIZE AND GUATEMALA. FUNDS WOULD BE SOUGHT FROM THE UK AND THE US.

5. THE PREMIER SAID GOB WANTED TO BE AS FORTHCOMING AS POSSIBLE IN REACHING AN ACCOMMODATION WITH GUATEMALA BUT THAT THERE WAS ONE AREA IN WHICH NO CONCESSION WOULD BE POSSIBLE, NAMELY, IN REGARD TO THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF BELIZE. HE ADDED THAT THE UNGA RESOLUTION RULED OUT ANY CONSIDERATION OF A CESSION OF TERRITORY.

6. COMMENT. THE PREMIER'S LIST IS BUT A SAMPLE OF THE CLOUD-NINE APPROACH HE IS KNOWN FOR. IT IS DOUBTFUL MANY OF THESE IDEAS WILL SURVIVE THE TRIP TO NEW ORLEANS. THE PREMIER GAVE STRONG AND STEELY-EYED EMPHASIS TO HIS REMARKS ON A POSSIBLE CESSION OF TERRITORY AND THIS, I FELT, WAS THE REMARK HE MOST CONFIDENTIAL

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WANTED TO IMPRESS ON ME.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMED FORCES, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, BOUNDARY CLAIMS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BELIZE00028
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760012-0650
From: BELIZE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760164/aaaacekm.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <15 SEP 2004 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PREMIER PRICE'S COMMENTS ON UK-GUATEMALA DISPUTE OVER BELIZE
TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, GT, BH, UK, (PRICE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006